City of Barrie

70 Collier Street
P.O. Box 400
Barrie, ON L4M 4T5

Final

International Relations Committee

Tuesday, October 3, 2023 | **6:00 PM** | **Sir Robert Barrie Room**

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT
For consideration by the Finance and Responsible Governance Committee on November 1, 2023.

Present: 13 - Councillor J. Harris
M. Sachkiw - Co Chair and Arras
Deputy Mayor R. Thomson
LCol G. Johnston - Base Borden
J. Babcock - Global Perspectives Program
T. Gardiner - Japan Twinning
C. Hassey
A. Jones
J. Massie
L. Palson - Georgian College
J. M. Pigeon - German Twinning
B. Sergeant - Harrogate
K. Watson - Georgian College

Absent: 2 - W. Hay
S. Scully-Pratt - Youth Ambassadors

STAFF:
Business Development Officer, N. Gavarre
Deputy City Clerk, T. McArthur
Director of Economic and Creative Economy, S. Schlichter
Legislative Coordinator, S. Drury.

The International Relations Committee met and reports as follows:

FOLLOW UP PRESENTATION CONCERNING THE MICHIGAN EXPLORATION

Stephanie Schlichter, Director of Economic and Creative Development, provided a presentation entitled “Michigan Exploration & Economic Partnerships Development”.

Ms. Schlichter discussed slides concerning the following topics:

- The City of Barrie’s history of sister/twin/friendship cities;
- The City’s current sister/twin/friendship cities;
- Connections between the State of Michigan and the Province of Ontario;
- Grand Rapids, Michigan;
- Saginaw, Michigan; and
- Developing new municipal relationships.

Members of Committee asked a number of questions to Ms. Schlichter and received responses.

The Committee discussed the similarities and differences between Barrie, Grand Rapids, and Saginaw.

Members of the Committee agreed to consider objectives and timelines for developing economic partnerships and report back at the next meeting.

HARROGATE, UNITED KINGDOM

Bill Sergeant reported that there would not be an official International Relations Committee sanctioned rugby exchange with Harrogate next year and that funds are no longer needed for this exchange.

Mr. Sergeant advised that opportunities and connections are being explored between Georgian College and Harrogate College and will report back once more information becomes available.

Mr. Sergeant and Jean Maurice Pigeon delivered a tribute to Bunty Brooks, a former Committee member who recently passed away, and who was pivotal in establishing close relations between Barrie and Harrogate.

YOUTH AMBASSADORS PROGRAM

Mark Sachkiw reported that the Global Perspectives and Youth Ambassador Programs would be presenting to October 4, 2023 City Council meeting.

The Committee discussed the following topics:

- The intake process for the Youth Ambassadors Program;
- The origins of the exchange programs;
- How to expand the exchange programs with a limited budget;
- Reviewing the Committee's subcommittees;
- Changing the Committee's 'buckets' from locations to areas such as youth, economics and postsecondary education; and
- Distribution of the Committee's minutes.

Committee members, Tina Gardner, Jean Maurice Pigeon, Mark Sachkiw, and Bill Sergeant agreed to provide the Committee with a summary of the Global Perspectives and Youth Ambassador Programs to provide clarity on the programs and how they operate.

GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES PROGRAM

Jamie Babcock provided an update concerning the Global Perspectives Program and the student delegation currently visiting the City from Zweibrucken, Germany. He advised that the delegation will be welcomed by Barrie City Council at the Council meeting on October 4, 2023.

Members of Committee asked a number of questions to Mr. Babcock concerning the delegation's visit to the City and received responses.

ZWEIBRUCKEN, GERMANY

Jean Maurice Pigeon provided an update concerning Zweibrucken, Germany, and the origins of its partnership with the City of Barrie.

The Committee discussed the German business group related to SBS Drivetec Inc. which is currently visiting the City.

MURAYAMA, JAPAN

Tina Gardner provided an update concerning Murayama, Japan. Ms. Gardner reported that efforts are being made to connect with the new Consulate General for Japan.

The Committee agreed to draft a letter to all of the City's partners introducing the new Mayor and Council.

ARRAS, FRANCE

Mark Sachkiw provided an update concerning Arras, France. Mr. Sachkiw reported that the last delegation that visited the City was impressed with the five international banners proudly displayed in Barrie's downtown area and that they are looking at replicating the idea.

The Committee agreed to request that the five international banners be flown for the summer months and displayed together in one place such as Meridian Place and not scattered throughout the downtown.

City staff reported that they would inquire with Access Barrie as to the process for hanging the banners, and if the five banners can be flown throughout the summer and displayed together.

LEGACY FUND UPDATE

Mark Sachkiw reported that the International Partners website has been updated.

Mr. Sachkiw commented that a year-end financial statement on the Legacy Fund should be available by mid-November. He noted that the purpose of the fund is to assist children who cannot afford to participate in the exchange programs.

A member of Council asked a question of clarification on the use of funds from the Committee's budget and the Legacy Fund to assist youth participating in the programs. The Committee agreed that additional background information be provided to the Committee to clarify the use of funds and that the information be discussed at the next meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

CHAIRMAN